

London Letter

(By PANTON HOUSE for the Canadian Press.)

LONDON, Oct. 13.—People still talk of coming to London "to see the lions," meaning to see the sights, and do not know that the phrase belongs to a time when all strangers went to see the King's Beasts in the Tower of London as a matter of duty. Where we now enter, there once stood an emerald archway known as the Lion Gate, from which a stone bridge led over the moat to the Lion Tower, which with the Middle Tower formed an island in the moat. The Lion Tower consisted of a ring of walls enclosing a pit, on which the animals' cages abutted. The "Master of the King's Beasts and Apes" had a dwelling close by.

For nearly 600 years—from 1235 to 1834—London's Zoo was at the Tower. The collection began with a present of three leopards, sent to King Henry III. In 1255 by the Emperor Frederick II, in complimentary allusion to the leopards seen to this day on the royal coat of arms. In the same year a present of a white bear was received from Norway, and accounts are still preserved dealing with the creature's expenses. Fourpence a day (equivalent to several shillings in modern money) was allowed for its food, and other items provided from the King's private purse were a muzzle, an iron chain, and a "long and strong cord to hold him when fishing in the River Thames." The poor prisoner was clearly expected to catch his own food sometimes. In 1255 a house, 40 by 20 feet, had to be provided for an elephant presented by King Louis of France. Towards the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign the collection included three lionesses, a lion, a tiger, a lynx, an English wolf (who must have been about the last of his race), a porcupine and an eagle. But the lions who gave their name to the menagerie were always its leading feature, and in the 18th century there were as many as 11. The present Zoological Gardens took over the last of them in 1834.

ANOTHER "LION"

Little more than a hundred years ago, one of the "lions" of London was a mental hospital! The Lions, the Tombs (in the Abbey) and Bedlam were considered, even in the 18th century, to make up a suitable programme for three lads on a visit to the Capital. People went to Bethlem Hospital in Moorfields to see the "antics" in exactly the same spirit in which they went to see the wild beasts in the Tower, and about the only regulations on visitors' movements was that they were not allowed to take strong drink or tobacco to the patients. Even so human and enlightened a person as Dr. Johnson was not too sensitive to walk through the wards, and as for Pepys (who notes that he stepped into Bedlam, and saw several poor miserable creatures in chains, one of them mad with making verses) it does not seem to have occurred to that genial soul and determined sight-seer that there was anything objectionable about the show—though he describes the then popular sport of bear-baiting as "a rude and nasty pleasure."

Readers of William de Morgan's novel "Alice-for-Short" will remember that the modern Bedlam (Bethlem Royal Hospital) at Lambeth is one of the finest mental hospitals in the world. It is the child of a charity founded in 1247 by Simon FitzMary, Sheriff of the City of London, in token of his gratitude for his deliverance from the Saracens when fighting in the Holy Land.

COACHING TO BRIGHTON.

Canadian visitors who want to recapture the "Dickens atmosphere" will be able to do so very soon, by taking a passage on the coach which is about to run from London to Brighton, three days a week. Starting from the "White Horse Cellars" in Piccadilly (the jumping-off place of the old mail-coach service to the west of England) it will do the trip in seven hours. Seven teams will do the journey, changing at the same places as in the old coaching days.

KING'S BARBER.

Charles Jasche, who was King Edward's barber for 10 years, and who has been cutting the hair and shaving the chins of the British aristocracy for nearly 40 years, has just closed down his famous shop in Regent St., on account of the rebuilding operations there. His saloon, known as the "House of Lords" was patronized by all manner of celebrities, from the Prince of Wales downwards. Visitors from Overseas used to make a bee-line for the chair with the brass plate that recorded the Prince's first visit. Mr. Jasche attended King Edward and trimmed his hair and beard on the very day before his death. When the Court was at Sandringham he would go there every Sunday; when it was at Balmoral, he journeyed there every ten days. He went to "India" in the "Rivonia" with King George, and sailed in the "Orphis" in her cruise of 1901.

DETAINED.

A distinguished visitor from Overseas was found wandering the other day in Britain, a London suburb, and having no visible means of support, was committed to the Zoo. Being a native of that place, he was almost

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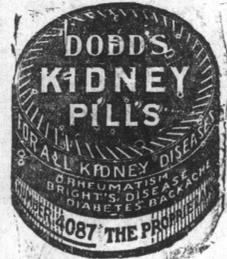
During the holiday month of August the Zoo had no less than 48,474 visitors, taking first place among the popular resorts of London. Kew Gardens came next with 252,419, Hampton Court Palace only records the number of visitors to the State Apartments—116,885; but, as three people are believed to see the gardens for every one who goes through the Palace itself, it should be reckoned as second favorite.

Preference May Now be Revived

Ottawa Views Conservative Return as Aid to More Empire Trade.

OTTAWA, Oct. 30.—The Conservative victory in Great Britain as viewed here will mean the probable resuscitation of the preference proposals of the former Baldwin Government which came out of last year's Imperial Conference but failed when the Government met defeat. The Canadian commodities most affected were apples, canned fish, honey, tobacco, and sugar.

It is considered rather fortunate that the Canadian-Australian reciprocity pact has been concluded and ratified by the Commonwealth Parliament. It was the defeat of the Imperial Preference proposals in Great Britain that made Australia more disposed to conclude an alternative trade arrangement with Canada in the face of opposition from some of the British manufacturing interests. The new agreement has not yet come into force and Premier Bruce has asked that it be deferred until approval by the Dominion Parliament, as it has been ratified by the Commonwealth Parliament. It is not believed that the probable return by Britain to the Imperial preference will prejudice its operation.



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